

Projected openings in occupations that require a college degree

Elka Torpey | September 2021

Which college-level occupations are expected to have many openings in the coming years? What types of career fields are they in? And how much do they pay? Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) answer these questions.

Each year, BLS projects employment and openings for hundreds of occupations. As part of its analysis, BLS determines the education and experience typically needed for people entering an occupation, along with any postentry training required to attain competency.

About half of the occupations analyzed by BLS typically require some type of college degree: associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral or professional. The occupations cover a range of career fields, including

Business, management, and sales

- Computer and engineering
- Education, social service, and legal
- Healthcare
- · Media, arts, and sports

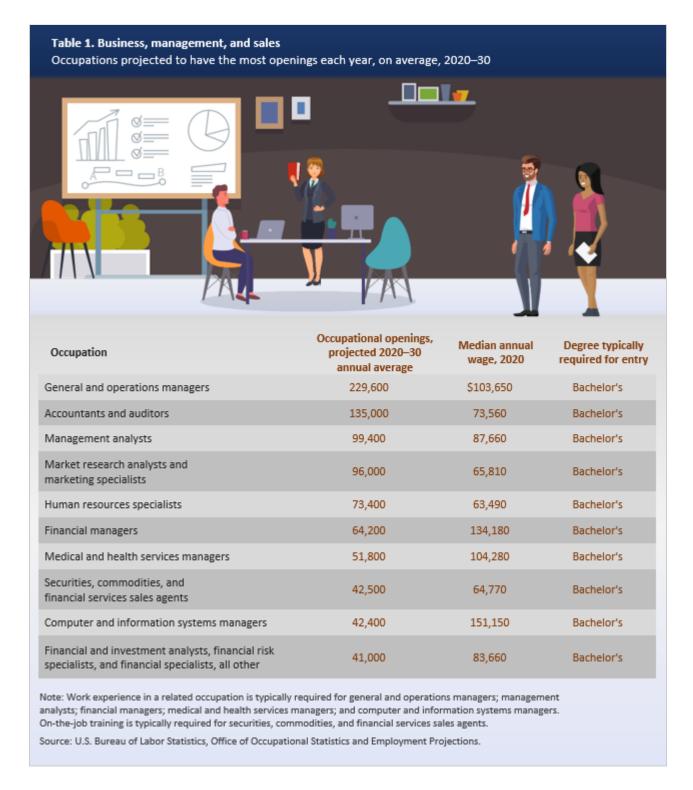
Keep reading to see projections and wage data for selected college-level occupations in each of these career fields. Tables show the degree that is typically required, along with 2020 median annual wages and the number of openings projected each year from 2020 to 2030. (A median wage is the wage at which half of workers in the occupation earned more than that amount, and half earned less. These wage data exclude self-employed workers.)

Compare the wages in the tables with the median annual wage for all occupations in 2020 (\$41,950) and with the median wages for occupations at the associate's (\$55,870), bachelor's (\$78,020), master's (\$76,800), and doctoral or professional (\$110,160) degree levels.

Most of the projected openings in these occupations stem from the need to replace workers who leave permanently, such as for retirement. But some openings are expected to result from newly created jobs.

Business, management, and sales

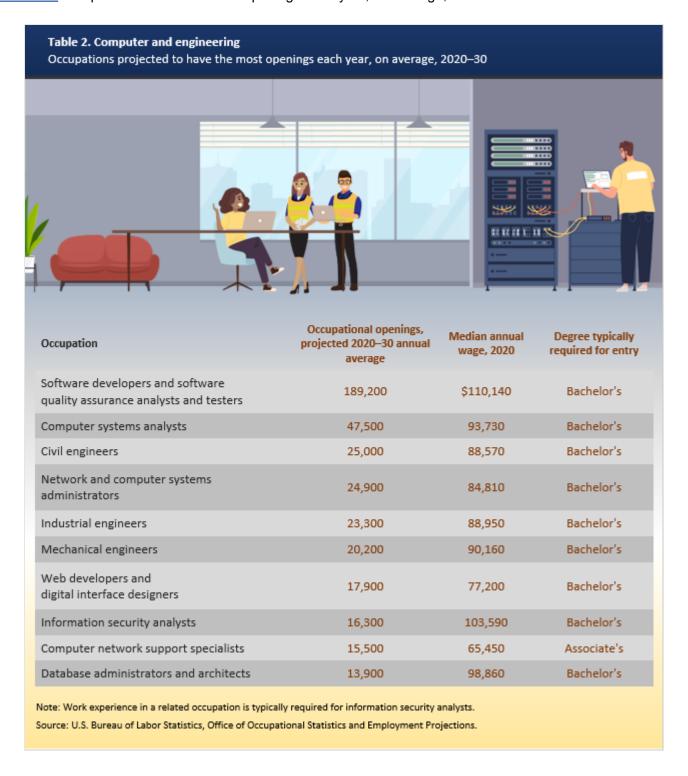
Workers in <u>business</u>, <u>management</u>, and <u>sales</u> occupations help organizations operate, oversee people or money, or promote products and services. Among the occupations in table 1, general and operations managers is projected to have the most openings each year, on average, from 2020 to 2030.



All the occupations in table 1 typically require a bachelor's degree for entry. Managers and <u>management analysts</u> also need work experience in a related occupation. <u>Securities, commodities, and financial services sales agents</u> typically receive on-the-job training after being hired, which may include preparation for the exams required to sell investment products and services.

Computer and engineering

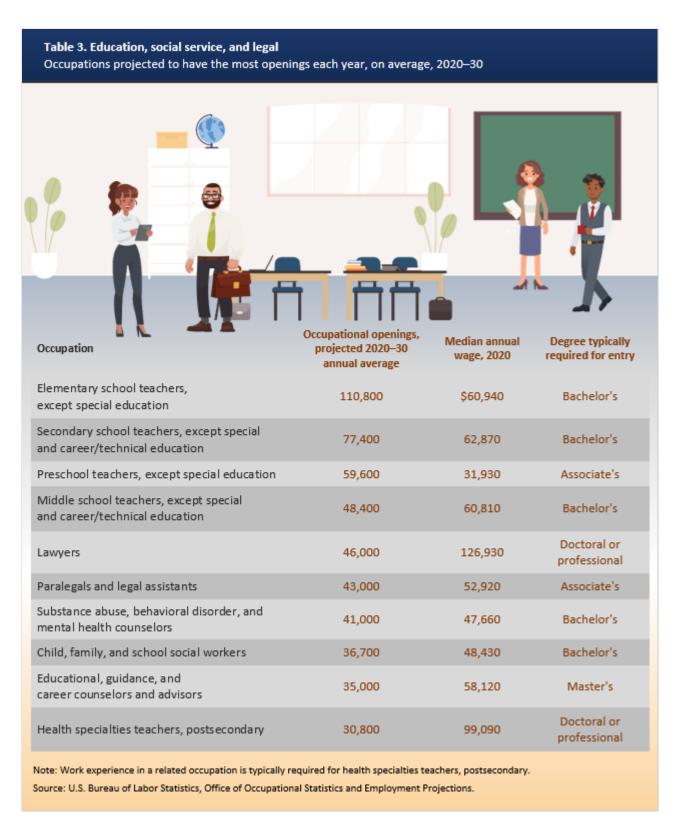
Workers in <u>computer</u> and <u>engineering</u> occupations use technical knowledge to solve problems and to develop products and systems. Of the occupations in table 2, software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers is expected to have the most openings each year, on average, from 2020 to 2030.



A bachelor's degree is typically required for all of the occupations in table 2, except for computer network support specialists; workers in this occupation typically need an associate's degree. Information security analysts often need experience in a related occupation. Employers may require information technology (IT) workers to have certifications related to the products they use.

Education, social service, and legal

Education, social service, and legal jobs involve helping people to learn, improve their lives, or resolve problems. Of the occupations in table 3, elementary school teachers is projected to have the most openings annually, on average, from 2020 to 2030.



Education assignments for the occupations in table 3 range from an associate's degree for <u>preschool teachers</u> and <u>paralegals</u> to a doctoral or professional degree for <u>postsecondary health specialties teachers</u> and <u>lawyers</u>. K-12

teachers, counselors, and social workers typically need a bachelor's or master's degree for entry. Most of these occupations also require licensure or certification.

Healthcare

Healthcare workers help people get or stay well. The number of projected openings for registered nurses—nearly 200,000 each year, on average, from 2020 to 2030—far surpasses those in the other occupations in table 4.

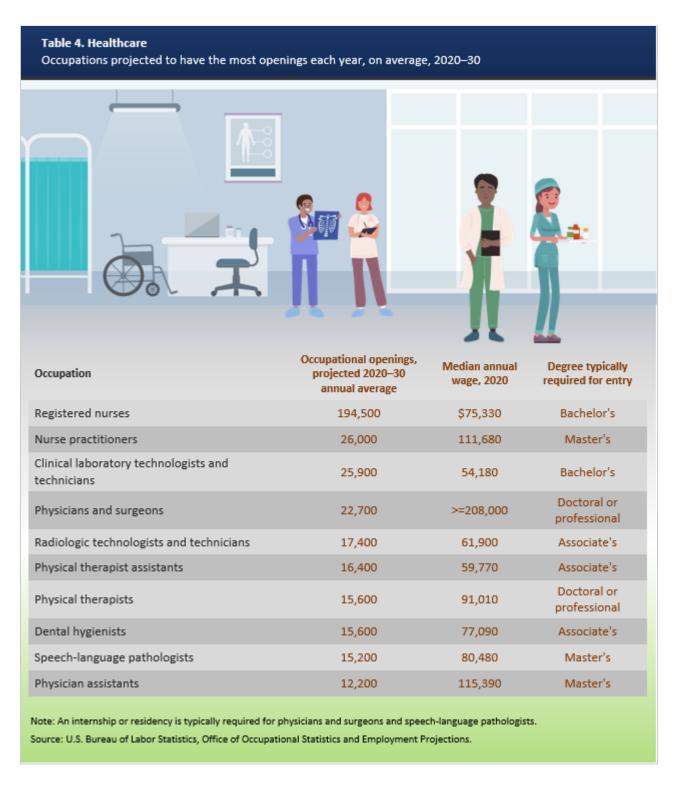
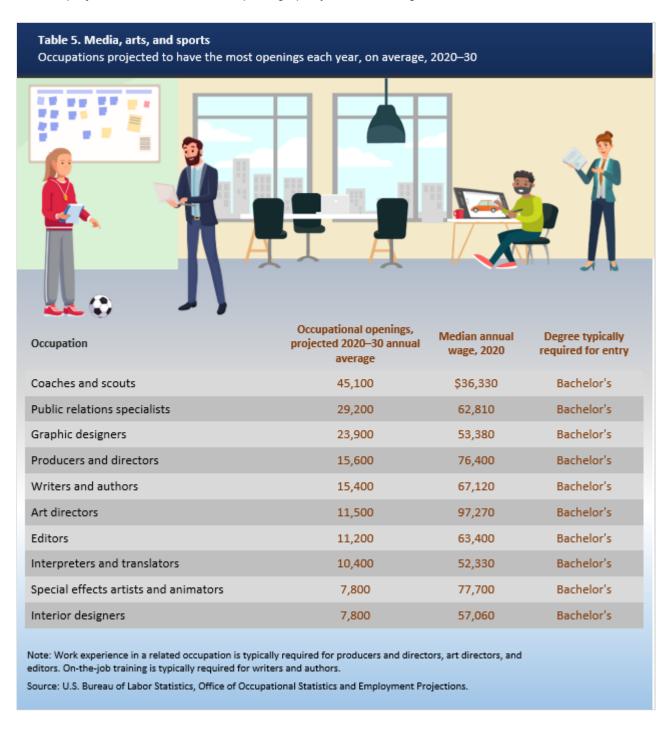


Table 4 has relatively few bachelor's-level occupations. <u>Dental hygienists</u>, <u>physical therapist assistants</u>, and <u>radiologic technologists</u> typically need an associate's degree. <u>Nurse practitioners</u>, <u>speech-language pathologists</u>, and <u>physician assistants</u> typically need a master's degree, and <u>physicians and surgeons</u> and <u>physical therapists</u> typically need a doctoral or professional degree. Most workers in these occupations must be licensed, and some also must complete an internship or residency.

Media, arts, and sports

<u>Media</u>, <u>arts</u>, and <u>sports</u> workers focus primarily on informing or entertaining. Of the occupations in table 5, <u>coaches</u> <u>and scouts</u> is projected to have the most openings per year, on average, from 2020 to 2030.



The occupations in table 5 all typically require a bachelor's degree. Work experience in a related occupation is usually important for several of these occupations, including <u>producers and directors</u>, <u>editors</u>, and <u>art directors</u>.

Internships, portfolios, or other ways to show proficiency often are helpful for getting a job in these fields. Some occupations have licensing or other requirements.

For more information

Learn more about what's required to enter the occupations highlighted in this article, as well as hundreds of others, in the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH). For example, the How to Become One section of the OOH often describes fields of degree, alternative paths for entering an occupation, or other steps in preparing for a career, such as completing an internship or earning a license or certification.

A full list of occupational projections that includes wages and the BLS education and training assignments is available from the <u>Employment Projections</u> program. Read more about the BLS assignments on the <u>education and training data</u> page.

BLS education assignments are based on analyses of the academic preparation that workers typically need to enter an occupation. However, the education that workers in an occupation have attained may vary. See American Community Survey data for breakdowns of educational attainment by detailed occupation.

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